



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

Post Office Box 12267
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June 6, 2007

The Honorable André Bauer
President of the Senate
State House, 1st Floor, East Wing
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate:

I am hereby vetoing and returning without my approval S. 334, R-88.

I do so with difficulty because this bill would help about 80 military spouses a year and because South Carolina has a proud military tradition, with many of our citizens having answered the call of duty throughout history. I join others in appreciation of the service of the men and women of our armed forces in defense of our country.

This bill allows an individual who voluntarily leaves his or her work to collect unemployment benefits. In this instance, departure is for the most noble of reasons – to relocate because of the transfer of a spouse who has been reassigned from one military assignment to another. Unfortunately, as it does so, it creates two other problems that we believe ultimately outweigh the good of this bill.

One, this legislation breaks the nexus between unemployment benefits and involuntary departure from the workplace. This sets a precedent that opens the door for future unemployment benefit law changes for a host of other reasons. For example, this legislation does not also apply to individuals whose spouses work in the private sector and are transferred to jobs in other states, which happens frequently with corporate families across our state. Similarly, families associated with other forms of public work in fire protection, EMS or police work do not have this benefit available to their spouses in the event of work transfer.

Two, these unemployment claims would be paid directly from the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund which, as we stated in our Budget, overcharges state agencies to the tune of \$3 million per year. As we are faced with an \$18 billion outstanding liability between the Other Post Employment Benefits, the State Retirement System, and the prepaid tuition program, we should be exceedingly circumspect about adding obligations to our current unfunded ledger sheet. Though I think the legislation is very well intended in its efforts to help military families who spend some time in South Carolina, we need to balance that against change to the universe of citizens eligible for unemployment benefits – and our obligation to taxpayers given currently unfunded promises now on the roles.

For the reasons stated above, I am vetoing S. 334, R-88, and returning it without my approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Sanford".

Mark Sanford